



**ACS Final Report Form
Grant Cycle IX June 2021 – June 2022**

Due September 12, 2022 by 5 pm EST via email (PDF/Word) to grants@acsouth.edu

- Complete this form in no more than five pages.
- Attach your final financial report in a separate document and submit it along with your report to grants@acsouth.edu.
- Note that portions or the entirety of your final report may be reprinted on the ACS grants webpage.

Name of project lead: Kent Andersen
 Campus: Birmingham-Southern College
 Project title: ACS Teaching and Learning Workshop Instructional Retreat
 Today's date: June 16, 2022

I. Project summary

Briefly describe the purpose, intended goals, and major activities of your project.

The goal for this grant was to convene the ACS Summer Teaching and Learning Workshop staff for a strategic planning retreat; it had been five years since our previous retreat and we needed to reflect collectively following a year of cancellation due to COVID-19 (2020) and a year of hosting the Workshop as a virtual experience (2021). We planned to convene in January 2022 but as our interim report describes, many of our staff members' travel plans were upended by COVID-19 and/or a snowstorm. Three of eleven staff members convened in person in January while others joined virtually via Zoom. While much was accomplished during the shortened retreat in January, as outlined in the interim report, we decided to reconvene in person in June to complete our work. We arranged to arrive a day early for our annual pre-Workshop training. The following staff members were present at the in-person retreat continuation on June 10, 2022, on the campus of Centre College:

Kent Andersen, co-director	BSC
Kerry Paumi, co-director	Centre
Sabrina Grondhuis	Millsaps
Sabrice Guerrier	Rollins
Amy Hammond	Centenary
Wenjia Liu	Hendrix
Barbara Lom, past director	Davidson
Deon Miles	Sewanee
Betsy Sandlin, past director	Sewanee
Johann Van Niekerk	Centre
Bobby Williamson	Hendrix

The staff members in attendance reflect a wide range of experience with the Workshop, including several veterans, one returning, and three new facilitators. This diversity of perspectives was highly beneficial in our conversations. During both the January and June meetings, we sought to revisit longstanding practices and envision new directions. As outlined in the proposal, our goals were as follows:

1. To revisit the stated learning outcomes from 2011 to verify alignment, accuracy, and relevance and rewrite outcomes as needed.
2. To collectively reflect on assessment data from previous years of the Workshop, including the virtual version.
3. To reflect on the virtual experience in 2021 to identify lessons learned and what to preserve in post-pandemic Workshop(s).
4. To retool the in-person Workshop based on reflections and insights identified, including plenary sessions and other forms of interaction.
5. To write a project plan / outline (including a budget) for at least one virtual Workshop option, which would include considerations for: timing, duration, plenary session topics, and target audience.
6. To write and submit to ACS leadership a five-year plan that incorporates both in-person and virtual options and addresses issues related to staffing, leadership, location, fee structure, and format.

II. Attainment of goals

Explain the steps you took to achieve and evaluate the success of *each* project goal. Provide details regarding the tools and methods used to measure each goal and the extent to which, based on those measurements, each goal was met.

Goal 1. Revisit learning outcomes to verify alignment, accuracy, and relevance.

Assessment: produce a revised or clarified set of learning outcomes with justifications grounded in the literature on learning and reflective of best practices in educational development.

Completed: We have a revised, more thorough mission statement and an enhanced and clarified set of learning outcomes. While collectively we agreed that the original learning outcomes satisfactorily represented the general aims of the workshop, we also agreed that they needed to be updated to reflect current practices and to make more explicit our audience and core values. A revised mission statement and outcomes are now included on the website (<https://www.acsouth.edu/core-initiatives/professional-development/acs-t-1/>) and in the manual (see appendix).

Goal 2 & 3: Reflect on prior year assessment data to identify lessons learned and what to preserve in post-pandemic Workshop(s).

Assessment: Articulate critically reflective learning insights that surface and test assumptions about relationships between evaluation data, experiences, and knowledge gained during the pandemic.

Significant Progress: The virtual conversation in January included reflection on prior Workshops, with emphasis on feedback to the 2021 virtual Workshop. At that time, staff identified potential audiences and foci for future offerings. In June, a portion of our retreat was dedicated to further consideration of a virtual version of the microteaching Workshop and additional, topic-based workshops. We divided into smaller groups to brainstorm professional development needs of ACS faculty. We then brainstormed ways we, as a facilitation team,

could fill some of those needs (see appendix for list of topics). Four decisions emerged from these discussions:

- a) **We will not offer a virtual version of the microteaching Workshop for the foreseeable future.** After revisiting the mission statement and learning outcomes, and reviewing assessment data, the staff concluded that the Workshop is most effective as an in-person experience and so we do not plan to provide a virtual version of the microteaching workshop in the future. We will revisit this topic as a group in June 2023.
- b) **We have formed three working groups. Two groups will explore the feasibility of future, topic-based virtual Workshops and a third group will consider how to make resources available online.**
 - a. One working group will explore a workshop on “teaching hacks,” or concrete strategies, that can drive course design or redesign to enhance both the teaching and learning experience. The teaching hacks working group will be facilitated by Amy Hammond.
 - b. A second working group will explore current grading practices, such as but not exclusive to ungrading and specifications grading. Sabrina Grondhuis will facilitate this group.
 - c. A third topic concerned short, easy-to-access, “static” resources that could be viewed at any time. Kent Andersen reached out to Doug Wofford to explore available electronic platforms. Doug indicated that using a virtual space hosted by the ACS is possible. The next step is to identify staff interested in developing these resources.

Working groups will provide an update to the workshop staff on the status of these options by June 2023. Rather than develop individual fee structures, groups will take advantage of existing grant processes within the ACS when possible.

- c) **We will place on hold the development and delivery of topic-based workshops on member campuses.** Multiple staff members continue to express interest in offering topic-based workshops on individual campuses and we find these activities exciting and valuable. However, other ACS-grant-funded offerings compete with higher-cost options, and so these options are on hiatus. As new topics, new granting opportunities, or other ways of funding emerge, interested staff will pursue these options.

Goal 4: Retool in-person Workshop (including plenary sessions) based on reflections and insights.

Assessment: identify changes to existing plenary sessions, new and alternative plenary sessions, or other types of sessions to incorporate into June Workshop.

Completed: At the January retreat, staff chose to retool the plenary on inclusive teaching to include more opportunity for reflection and transfer of experiences and insights to participants’ specific teaching context. A lead facilitator for this revision was identified (Barbara Lom); she worked with other staff members to revise the plenary for June 2022. At the June retreat, we also discussed each standing plenary to identify what is working and what needs modification. While minor adjustments will be made to the in-person plenaries as we incorporate new staff members and update our references, no major changes to plenary topics are planned at this time. The final plenary was identified as in need of the most revision. For June 2022, we incorporated revisions to this plenary that better align with the stated aims. Regular, ongoing revisions of plenaries is standard practice and will continue.

Goal 5: Produce an outline (including a budget) for at least one virtual workshop.

Assessment: A fully developed plan, with a self-sustaining budget, for at least one virtual workshop to be offered on a regular rotation and targeted to a specific audience.

Limited Progress: In January, the staff restated their interest in continuing to discuss the feasibility of a virtual workshop; as noted above, these interests did not persist for members present at the June retreat. At the January retreat, staff also considered the possibility of

consultancy at multiple times throughout the year. This idea was also explored in June, but no working group was identified to pursue this idea in full. This idea is included in our list of topics (see appendix); the staff will revisit this idea in June 2023.

Goal 6: Write and submit to ACS leadership a five-year plan.

Assessment: produce a five-year plan that lays out the opportunities and challenges of preserving the in-person workshop in June of each year and an alternative virtual workshop to be offered.

Considerable Progress: Following the January portion of the retreat, we completed a draft of a staff/director handbook, which outlines the processes for site selection, staff recruitment, and other policies and practices (see appendix). Staff reviewed this document in June. Staff recruitment ensures future sustainability of the Workshop; a new, more inclusive process for staff recruitment was suggested and was piloted in January and February. We received 17 applications from prior participants and hired two new facilitators from this pool. Prior recruitment relied on staff memory and impressions of participants; the new process includes a call for applications to recent participants who can apply for consideration. This major change is a fairer and more equitable process than before and has resulted in a diverse and representative staff and deepened the staff pool.

We were not able to finalize a five-year plan. The cessation of the pandemic and the normalization of life with COVID has enabled us to foresee in-person workshops each June, as in years past. We are scheduled to hold the workshop at Centre for at least two more years (2023 & 2024), if not three (2025). We did not yet identify a location for 2026, but staff will initiate conversations with deans and others on their campuses, guided by the criteria outlined in the handbook. Specific options include Millsaps, Hendrix, and Rollins. Because time at Sewanee was truncated by the pandemic, returning to Sewanee is also an option. We anticipate having proposals for new sites by June 2023, and a final decision by December 2023 or June 2024.

III. Impact of project

Explain the impact your project had on relevant constituencies (e.g., students), structures, (e.g., a major program), processes (e.g., community engagement), and/or relationships (e.g., consortial partnerships).

The Summer Teaching & Learning Workshop, which just concluded its 29th year, remains one of the most consistent and well-regarded programs offered by the ACS. Strategic planning retreats like this one are vital to ensuring the Workshop's continued success and relevance. Through work done in the retreat, we have:

- generated a new pool of facilitators (including those from institutions not currently represented on staff)
- strengthened the relationships of current and new facilitators
- built new processes and policy documents to ensure the continued viability of the Workshop
- identified areas for growth through which we may provide additional professional development to more faculty in the consortium.

IV. Consortial (ACS-wide) value of the project

Describe how your project results can or will strengthen ACS, e.g., via the dissemination of a final report, the future training of campus leaders, or the building of an inclusive community of practice.

The Workshop hosts participants from all sixteen ACS institutions. We will continue offering this workshop. For 2022, all ACS institutions provided nominees, for a total nomination pool of 35 potential participants. By the start of the workshop in 2022, there were 24 participants representing all institutions except Morehouse. Our staff facilitators currently represent eight institutions, with an expanded pool that includes potential facilitators from additional schools. By participating in visioning and planning for the Workshop's future, we continue to build on our long-standing consortial commitments and relationships. Further, our time at the retreat enables us to imagine how workshop staff might take further advantage of ACS grants and other resources to offer additional programming.

V. Lessons Learned

Describe the surprises, challenges, and lessons learned during the project, e.g., is there something you are very glad you did or would do differently? Did you face obstacles that called for creative problem-solving? What would have made the project even more successful?

The retreat confirmed the value of setting aside time for strategic planning and reflection. Due to unforeseen last-minute difficulties in schedules, COVID-19 (Omicron variant outbreak), and inclement weather, it was difficult for all 12 staff members to meet in person at the planned time of January 6 & 7. We did our best to overcome these challenges as described above. Planning an additional retreat day in person, at the beginning of our training for the Summer T&L Workshop in June, proved useful for reflecting on our goals and coordinating plans. Overall, we were pleased with the outcomes of the time spent in Danville on both occasions, and we feel the Workshop and future spinoffs will be in excellent shape in 2022 and beyond. Holding time for planning proves essential for building staff morale and anticipating challenges. While the Workshop in its current form is a tried-and-true professional development experience, it is important to regularly reflect and build upon existing strengths and identify areas for improvement. Such reflection was possible through the grant, and we are grateful for the opportunity.

VI. Next Steps

Explain what you intend to do with/how to you intend to use or build on the results of your project.

- The workshop handbook will be shared with current and new staff members and will serve as a resource for onboarding, setting expectations, and planning.
- The three working groups focused on new workshop options and online resources will report back to the staff no later than June 2023; specific next steps, including potential conversations with the ACS President or applications through existing grants, will be determined at that time.
- New Workshop facilitation application process will be activated as determined by staffing needs.
- We will review and determine next sites for the workshop when we meet in June 2023.

VII. Feedback/suggestions for the ACS grant program (optional)